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Adoption of the report of the Committee on its forty-first session

Draft report

Rapporteur: Mr. Ayman M. Elgammal (Egypt)

Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003

(Item 4 (a))

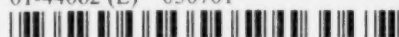
Section 3. Political affairs

1. At its 15th meeting, on 20 June 2001, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 3, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003.

2. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

3. Support was expressed for the role and activities of the programme. Its importance in the area of maintenance of peace and security was also stressed. Support was also expressed for the new format of the fascicle, and an observation was made that the new format represented a substantial improvement. The view was also expressed that the programme narrative in the budget fascicle should be consistent with the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005. In this connection, observations were made that some of the objectives did not reflect the medium-term plan. Observations were also made that some of the indicators of achievement were not clear and, as such, were difficult to measure. Moreover, it was observed that some external factors were drafted too broadly.



4. The view was expressed that resources proposed were commensurate with the level of activities of the Department of Political Affairs and that they were appropriately distributed among various subprogrammes. It was noted, however, that the capacity to support the Security Council was not adequate to absorb the increasing activities of the Council. The view was expressed that human resources in the Department should be geographically diversified to ensure better understanding of the issues dealt with by the Department.

5. It was pointed out that Africa faced widespread instability and the political situations in many parts of the continent remained volatile. It was indicated that there was a need for greater cooperation between the Department of Political Affairs and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights regarding the subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa to strengthen the political aspects of the Centre for the promotion of democracy. It was also pointed out that extrabudgetary resources might be necessary to support the activities of the Centre.

6. It was observed that prevention of conflicts was an important area of the programme. The view was expressed that any assistance for electoral assistance should be provided at the specific request of Member States. The view was also expressed that elections were the foundations for democracy, and required a substantial amount of resources. In this connection, it was observed that electoral assistance was important, and that there should be substantial support in that area. It was pointed out that the work of the Security Council Sanctions Committees was of high priority. It was observed that the activities of the Sanctions Committees presented in the proposed programme budget did not reflect adequately the medium-term plan for 2002-2005. The outputs, it was observed, were more of a technical nature and not analytical ones.

7. The view was expressed that the indicators of achievement under subprogramme 5, Question of Palestine, were difficult to measure. It was also noted that the success of the programme was dependent on the level of support given to it.

8. The view was expressed that activities within the Division for Palestinian Rights did not constitute an appropriate use of scarce United Nations resources, since they do nothing to advance the cause of reaching a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, and in fact complicate the search for a negotiated outcome. It was also expressed that the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories is not only biased but also duplicative of efforts by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Conclusions and recommendations

9. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 3, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003, subject to the following modifications:

Paragraph 3.3

In line 4 after "Member States", in accordance with paragraph 1.3 of the medium-term plan for 2002-2005, add the following:

"and the principles of non-intervention in matters that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state and of consent".

Table 3.12

Under *Expected accomplishments*, after "for the conduct of elections", add "in accordance with the relevant resolutions and decisions".

Under *Indicators of achievement*, replace subparagraph (i) with "Provision of electoral assistance to Member States in response to their request".

Paragraph 3.26

Delete the phrase "a fair and free" and replace it with "an".

At the end of the sentence add "in accordance with relevant resolutions and decisions".

Paragraph 3.27

In subparagraph (a) (i) a., delete the words "the principle of periodic and genuine", and add at the end of the sentence "in accordance with relevant resolutions and decisions".

In subparagraph (d) (ii), replace "authorities at the regional, national and local level" with "national electoral institutions".

Paragraph 3.38, first sentence

In line 3, after the first sentence, in accordance with paragraph 1.26 of the medium-term plan for 2002-2005, add the following sentence:

"Assistance will be provided to the Committee in promoting a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine in accordance with all relevant United Nations resolutions, as well as the full and effective implementation of the Israeli-Palestinian peace agreements".

10. The Committee recommended that in implementing subprogramme 3, Security Council affairs, adequate capacities should be developed for carrying out analytical and research work in connection with the implementation and effectiveness of mandatory measures or sanctions imposed by the Security Council and their impact on the population in target and third countries as well as the evolution of the concept of "smart" sanctions taking into account special economic problems of affected third states, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the medium-term plan for 2002-2005. Special economic problems of affected third states should also be duly taken into account.